

VIA VOYAGER CHANNEL

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July 18, 1973

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

TO: AMBASSADOR BRUCE

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

State Dept. review completed

We have just received a message from the Chinese which is quoted below. It is substantially more brutal than anything else we have received on Cambodia or anything else to-date. Our initial evaluation of the message is that it is a much more fundamental problem than simply Cambodia. There are no elements of grace, no mention of my visit, and no reference to any aspects of the larger dialogue in which we have been engaged.

We would like urgent assessment of Jenkins/Holdridge by 0900 Washington time Thursday of this message in light of the entire sequence of their communications on Cambodia going back to May. Please note tone, substance, fact that it is confined to Cambodia and give us your views as to whether this calculated to force me to take the onus of cancelling the trip, represents a fundamental policy change, or simply embarrassment at the inability to deliver. Is there anything in the Chinese press which would support this kind of message? You should know in assessing this that we have told Chinese some threatening things Brezhnev said before Huang departed, which I planned to provide you during my visit in detail.

Our present thinking is to cancel my trip with a cool note which we would pass here on Saturday, asking them to offer another date after

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September 1 for a visit. On Monday or Tuesday Ambassador Bruce would pass a harsh response to their Cambodia note, express his astonishment and offer a fundamental discussion of the full range of US/Chinese relations. Request your urgent assessment. Also evaluate this approach. Please give us fuller assessment by 1700 Friday, Washington time.

QUOTE MESSAGE(attached)..... UNQUOTE.

Warm regards.

Handed to [redacted] for [redacted] Han Han
6³⁰ pm, [redacted], 7/18/73

It is believed that the U.S. side is aware of the recent developments in the situation in Cambodia. Of late, Samdech Sihanouk, head of state of Cambodia, and the National United Front and the Royal Government of National Union led by him have repeatedly enunciated their position in public, reiterating the Five-Point Declaration of March 23, 1970, and demanding that the United States immediately end its bombing of Cambodia, stop its military aids to the Lon Nol clique and withdraw all military personnel dispatched by the United States and its allies. In conformity with its consistent position stated to the U.S. side on many occasions, the Chinese side fully supports the above Cambodian demands. Nevertheless, the U.S. side is still obdurately continuing its bombing of Cambodia, intensifying its support to the Lon Nol clique and putting pressure on Samdech Sihanouk and the Royal Government of National Union in other respects. This has all the more enraged Samdech Sihanouk, the Royal Government of National Union and the Cambodian people. Under these circumstances, the Chinese side holds that it is obviously inappropriate to communicate to Samdech Sihanouk the tentative thinking on the settlement of the Cambodian question as set forth by the U.S. side in late May. The Chinese side wishes to inform the U.S. side of this with frankness.

The origin of the Cambodian question is clear to the U.S. side. "It is up to the doer to undo the knot." The key to the settlement of the question is held by the United States, and not by others. If the United States truly desires to settle the Cambodian question, the above reasonable demands raised by the Cambodian side should be acceptable to it. It is hoped that the U.S. side will give serious consideration to this and translate it into action.